

Government's Response to question #5, Set of Questions/Answers dated 5/27/04:

Prior Offeror Question:

"It is still unclear if the "contracting team" that prepares the response to sample task 3 is limited to the 5 people who may work the oral presentation. In other words are the preparation personnel a subset of the 5 oral participants? Please clarify."

Prior Government Response:

"There is no limitation on the number of people who may be used to prepare Sample Task 3. A total of five people may be used for oral presentation as long as they meet the requirements as stipulated in Section L-15.3.

Section L-15.3 shall be amended to read "... The offeror will be provided a separate room to prepare Sample Task 3. At the conclusion of presenting Sample Task 2, the offeror shall have 60 minutes to caucus to finalize its Sample Task 3 response ...".

An example could be the offeror can have a separate group prepare Sample Task 3 that may not involve any of the five oral presenters. However, it will be left to the offeror's discretion to determine the number of these individuals that may be involved with both preparation and/or presentation of Sample Task 3."

Follow-up Question:

1. The Government benefits greatly from evaluating contract team presenters and preparers who will be directly working the contract after award. L-15.3 states, "No professional presenters are permitted." An absence of limitation of preparers for Sample Task 3 opens up the opportunity for professional preparers to participate in sample task response development.

The Government gains no value by having those not planned to work the contract participate in sample task preparation. By enforcing a restriction that limits sample task preparation and presentation to key personnel only, the Government can adequately evaluate the capabilities of each offeror. Would the Government reconsider allowing only key personnel to prepare and present Sample Task 3, as long as they meet the requirements as stipulated in L-15.3?

Follow-up Answer:

No. In accordance with performance-based principles, the Government desires to give offerors flexibility in drafting up their response to Sample Task 3 by permitting offerors to use whatever personnel resources they desire to create that response. Those non-professional-preparer personnel presenting the offeror's response to Sample Task 3 must know the details of that response in order to adequately present that response to the Government and answer any clarification questions thereto. That fact gives the Government sufficient confidence that it will be able to evaluate the capabilities of each offeror irrespective of whether professional presenters assisted in drafting the offeror's response to Sample Task 3.

Government's Response to question #10, Set of Questions/Answers dated 5/27/04:

"If the offeror had 5 previous Government contracts whose effort was relevant to the effort required by this solicitation and performed within the last 5 years, the limit of pages for Attachment 2 and its associated pages would be 15 total pages."

Follow-Up Question:

2. With the requirement for the "Reference Information Sheet," two pages of summary description, and SF 294 there could be four pages for past performance referenced. The Past

Performance section would then be 20 pages (if each of the 5 references included SF 294's). Please clarify that the Past Performance page limitation includes the SF 294's. Recommend the Government exclude the required SF 294's from the 15 page limitation stated above.

Follow-Up Answer:

The Past Performance page limitation includes the SF 294's. Table 1 of Section L-13.9 has been modified to include the Slide/Page Limit of 20 for (G) Past Performance in Amendment 0001.

3. Page 77-78/Sections L-16.1.7.1-4: The RFP for the current contract (N00039-98-R-0054) required responses to 3 sample tasks during the previous solicitation process. The problems for Sample task 1 and sample task 2 are virtually identical in the current RFP (N00039-03-R-0015) as they were 5 years ago. Will the government provide replacement sample tasks given the incumbent has the advantage of both previously preparing the sample task and then receiving a de-brief on their strengths and weaknesses after the last contract award?

Answer: Sample Task 1 and 2 represents the best scenario of the duties required by PMW-C161 to perform its IA services on a yearly basis. More importantly, however, the Government notes that Section L-16.1.7 of the instant RFP requires that offerors proposed responses to these sample tasks that contain performance-based principles. Since there is no set standard IA solution, each offeror has the opportunity to provide innovative approaches, methods and processes to fulfill and show the Government its full understanding of the IA issue in the context of performance-based principles. In contrast, RFP No. N00039-98-R-0054 contained no such performance-based requirement.

As a result, RFP No. N00039-98-R-0054 did not require the Government to evaluate proposed task orders in the context of performance-based principles. In contrast, Section M-4.1.3 of the instant RFP requires the Government to do precisely that. Therefore, although Sample Tasks 1 and 2 are similar to those contained in RFP No. N00039-98-R-0054, by definition offerors' responses to the sample tasks contained in the current RFP will be different from responses the incumbent proposed in response to RFP No. N00039-98-R-0054 and the Government will use different criteria to evaluate responses to sample tasks submitted in response to the instant RFP than it did for RFP No. N00039-98-R-0054.

Put another way, the incumbent proposed a response to a sample task that did not have to comply with performance-based principles referenced in the instant RFP. The incumbent's responses were not evaluated in accordance with those non-existent performance-based principles. The incumbent never received a debriefing on any strengths/weaknesses contained in its responses to those sample tasks it submitted to the Government five years ago that may have related to performance-based principles. Therefore, the incumbent has little (if any) "advantage" over non-incumbent offerors. Accordingly, the Government will not change or modify Sample Task 1 or 2. The Government will ensure that Sample Task 3 will be significantly different from the prior solicitation to maintain impartiality.

4. Page 77-78/Sections L-16.1.7.1-4: Given that sample tasks 1 and 2 are identical in this RFP and the last RFP, does the government intend to also use the same sample task 3 as used previously? If yes, can it be provided now so all competitors have the same advantage as the incumbent?

Answer: No (see the answer to Question No. 3). No.

5. Question 7/Question Set #3: The response to question 7 conflicts with page 139, paragraph M-4.1.6. Does the government intend to issue an amendment to change the evaluation criteria to reflect their answer to question 7?

Answer: The Government believes no conflict exists between its prior answer to question 7 and the tables listed in tables (1) and (2) in Section 4.1.6. The Government still intends to evaluate Small Business participation as a percentage of total acquisition.

6. Question 8/Question Set #3: Table 1 (in question set #3) was modified to reflect question 8. However, the 20-page limit was apparently applied to past performance in Table 1 vice resumes. Does the government intend to issue an amendment to correct Table 1 as supplied in question set #3?

Answer: Yes. Table 1 of Section L-13.9 has been modified to include the Slide/Page Limit of 20 for Resumes of Proposed Key Personnel in Amendment 0001.

7. Question 10/Question Set #3: Table 1 (in question set #3) was modified to reflect question 10. However, the 15-page limit for contract references was apparently erroneously changed to 20 pages. Does the government intend to issue an amendment to correct Table 1 as supplied in question set #3?

Answer: Yes. Table 1 in Section L-13.9 has been modified to include the Slide/Page Limit of 20 for Resumes of Proposed Key Personnel and Slide/Page Limit of 20 for (G) Past Performance in Amendment 0001.

8. Page 77/Section L-16.1.6.1(a)(1): The proposed level of effort for both initial task orders “shall exceed \$2,700,000”. The period of performance for the initial task orders is only 2 months (per answer to question 17 on question set 3#). This seems contradictory, as the projected level of effort for a full year would then exceed \$16,200,000. Please clarify.

Answer: When awarding an IDIQ contract, the Government must include a clause that states both the minimum and maximum supplies or services to be ordered, hence the inclusion of Clause B-2 CONTRACT MINIMUM—MAXIMUM SUPPLIES AND SERVICES. As a result, \$2,700,000 is the Government’s best estimate of the minimum cost and fee of all services to be provided for this effort.

9. FAR 37.602-1: Subparagraph 37.602-1 states, “To achieve the maximum benefits of performance-based contracting, task order contracts should be awarded on a multiple award basis (see 16.504(c) and 16.505(b)).” Does the government intend to make multiple awards on this procurement?

Answer: No. In accordance with FAR 16.504(c)(2)(i)(A), the Government has determined that multiple-awards are not practicable.